

AP Human Geography

Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

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12-17% AP Exam Weighting

7.1	The Industrial Revolution
7.2	Economic Sectors and Patterns
7.3	Measures of Development
7.4	Women and Economic Development
7.5	Theories of Development
7.6	Trade and the World Economy
7.7	Changes as a Result of the World Economy
7.8	Sustainable Development

AP Human Geography Unit 7.3: Measures of Development Review Notes

Unit 7: Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes

Enduring Understanding (SPS-7)

Industrialization, a transformative force throughout history and continuing today, has undeniably propelled advancements in living standards across the globe. **From improved access to goods and services to medical breakthroughs and technological innovations, the industrial era has reshaped human existence.** However, this progress has not been uniform. A critical concept in human geography is **geographically uneven development**, which highlights how the benefits and burdens of industrialization are unequally distributed. **This disparity manifests as significant differences in wealth, health outcomes, educational opportunities, and overall well-being between and within countries.** Understanding this unevenness is crucial for **analyzing global patterns of development and inequality.**

Learning Objective (SPS-7.C)

The primary objective of this unit is to **describe and understand the various social and economic measures of development.** These measures are the tools geographers and economists employ to quantify and assess the progress, well-being, and quality of life within different nations and regions. By examining these indicators, we can gain insights into the complex processes of development and the challenges faced by diverse populations.

Essential Knowledge and Key Concepts

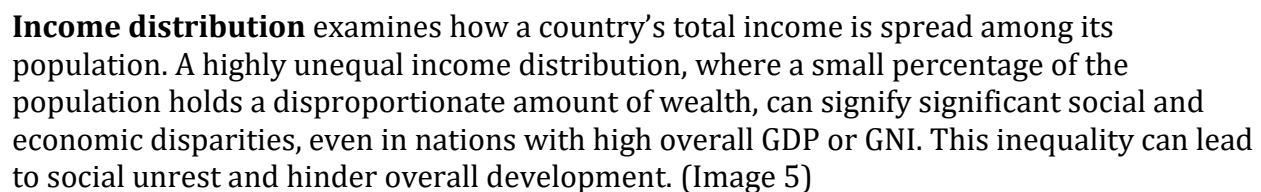
I. Economic Measures of Development (SPS-7.C.1)

Economic measures provide a snapshot of a country's financial health and the structure of its economy. They help us gauge the volume of goods and services produced and how economic prosperity is shared among the population. **(please review Supplement 1)**

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) represents the total monetary value of all finished goods and services produced within a country's borders during a specific period, typically a year. It serves as a fundamental indicator of a nation's economic size and output. For instance, a country with a high GDP generally possesses a large and productive economy, capable of generating substantial wealth. (Image 1)

Gross National Product (GNP), in contrast, measures the total value of goods and services produced by a country's citizens and companies, regardless of their location. This means GNP includes income earned by domestic companies operating abroad but excludes income earned by foreign companies operating within the country. For example, if a U.S. company manufactures cars in Mexico, that production contributes to the U.S. GNP but not its GDP. (Image 2)

The **sectoral structure of an economy** refers to the distribution of economic activity across different sectors: primary (agriculture, mining), secondary (manufacturing), tertiary (services), and sometimes quaternary (information, research) and quinary (high-level decision-making). This structure can be divided into the **formal economy**, which encompasses all officially recorded, taxed, and regulated economic activities (e.g., factory jobs, government employment), and the **informal economy**, which includes unrecorded, untaxed, and unregulated activities (e.g., street vending, undeclared labor). While the informal economy provides livelihoods for many, particularly in developing countries, it often lacks worker protections and benefits, and its output is not fully captured in official economic statistics. (e.g., renting residential homes to people in Taiwan) – (Image 4)



energy demands, historically met by fossil fuels. However, there is a growing global shift towards renewable energy sources, indicating a country's commitment to environmental sustainability and technological advancement. The balance between these energy sources can reveal a nation's development priorities and environmental impact.

II. Social Measures of Development (SPS-7.C.1)

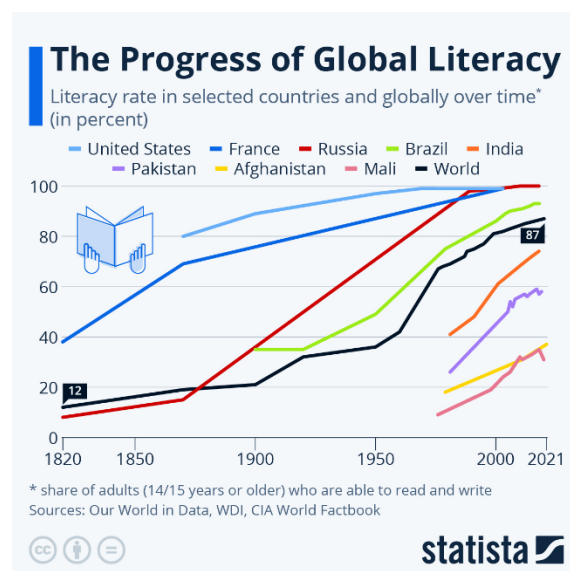
Social measures delve into the human condition, assessing the well-being of a population through indicators related to health, education, and access to essential services.

Fertility rates, specifically the total fertility rate (TFR), represent the average number of children a woman is expected to have during her lifetime. Generally, lower fertility rates are observed in more developed countries, often linked to increased access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women. This demographic shift reflects changing societal roles and family planning choices. (Image 6)

Infant mortality rates (IMR) measure the number of deaths of infants under one year old per 1,000 live births. A high IMR is a stark indicator of inadequate healthcare, poor sanitation, and insufficient nutrition, conditions frequently found in less developed regions. Conversely, low IMRs are characteristic of nations with robust healthcare systems and high living standards. (Image 7)

Access to healthcare encompasses the availability and quality of medical services, including doctors, hospitals, and essential medicines. Comprehensive and accessible healthcare is a hallmark of developed nations, contributing to higher life expectancies, lower disease burdens, and improved overall public health. Disparities in healthcare access often mirror broader development inequalities.

Literacy rates denote the percentage of the population aged 15 and above who can read and write. High literacy rates are foundational for economic development, as an educated populace is more productive, innovative, and adaptable to changing economic landscapes. Education empowers individuals and fosters national progress.



III. Measures of Gender Inequality (SPS-7.C.2)

Gender inequality measures are crucial for understanding how development impacts men and women differently, revealing disparities in opportunities and outcomes.

The **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** is a composite measure developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) that quantifies the loss in achievement within a country due to gender inequality. It considers three key dimensions: (Image 9)

- **Reproductive Health:** This dimension is assessed by the maternal mortality ratio (deaths of mothers during childbirth per 100,000 live births) and the adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15-19). Better reproductive health outcomes for women are strongly associated with higher levels of development, reflecting improved healthcare and women's control over their reproductive lives.
- **Empowerment:** This is measured by the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women and the proportion of adult women and men with at least some secondary education. Higher empowerment signifies greater political representation and educational attainment for women, indicating their increased participation in decision-making processes and access to knowledge.
- **Labor-Market Participation:** This dimension compares the labor force participation rates of women and men. Greater female participation in the formal workforce indicates more economic opportunities, reduced gender disparities in employment, and women's increased contribution to the national economy.

IV. Composite Measures of Development (SPS-7.C.3)

Composite measures integrate multiple indicators to offer a more holistic and nuanced perspective on development, recognizing its multifaceted nature beyond purely economic terms.

The **Human Development Index (HDI)**, also developed by the UNDP, is a widely used composite statistic that combines three fundamental dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life (measured by life expectancy at birth), knowledge (measured by mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling), and a decent standard of living (measured by GNI per capita). The HDI ranks countries into four tiers of human development, providing a comprehensive tool for illustrating **spatial variation**—the differences across geographic space—in levels of development. By incorporating social and health indicators alongside economic ones, the HDI offers a more complete picture of a nation's progress and the well-being of its people, moving beyond the limitations of purely economic metrics. (Image 10)



Suggested Skill: Data Analysis (3.F)

Explain possible limitations of the data provided.

When engaging in data analysis, particularly with development indicators, it is paramount to critically evaluate the data's limitations. No single statistic tells the complete story, and a nuanced understanding requires acknowledging what the data might not reveal:

- **Averages can hide disparities:** Measures like GDP per capita or GNI per capita are aggregate averages that can mask significant internal inequalities. A high national average might obscure extreme poverty experienced by a large segment of the population, failing to reflect the true distribution of wealth within a country.
- **Informal economy underrepresentation:** Official economic indicators often fail to fully account for the informal economy. This oversight can lead to an underestimation of economic activity and livelihoods, especially in developing countries where the informal sector can be substantial.
- **Data collection challenges:** In many less developed countries, resources for data collection are limited, leading to incomplete, inaccurate, or outdated statistics. This can hinder precise analysis and policy formulation.
- **Cultural and social biases:** Some development measures may not adequately capture the unique cultural contexts or social structures that influence well-being in different societies. What constitutes a 'good quality of life' can vary significantly across different cultures, and quantitative metrics may not fully encompass these diverse perspectives.
- **Environmental impact:** Traditional economic development measures often prioritize growth without adequately accounting for the environmental costs associated with industrialization and resource extraction. This can lead to a misleading picture of sustainable development.
- **Qualitative vs. Quantitative:** Many crucial aspects of human well-being, such as happiness, freedom, social cohesion, and cultural richness, are inherently qualitative and difficult to quantify. These vital elements are often not fully captured by the statistical indicators discussed, highlighting the limitations of a purely quantitative approach to development.

Key Takeaways for Rubio:

For a comprehensive understanding of development, students should grasp these fundamental principles:

- **Development is complex and multidimensional:** It extends far beyond mere economic growth, encompassing social well-being, health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. A holistic view is essential.
- **Indicators are powerful storytelling tools:** Each measure, whether economic, social, or composite, provides a unique piece of the puzzle, collectively narrating a country's development journey and its challenges. Learning to interpret these indicators allows for a deeper understanding of global disparities.

- **Interconnectedness is key:** Economic and social factors are not isolated but are deeply intertwined. For example, investments in education (a social measure) can lead to a more skilled workforce, higher productivity, and increased income (economic measures). Similarly, improved healthcare can boost economic participation.
- **Significant disparities persist globally:** Despite advancements, the world continues to exhibit profound differences in development levels both between nations and within them. Understanding the causes and consequences of these disparities is central to human geography.
- **Critical thinking is paramount:** Students must cultivate a critical approach to data. It is vital to always question what the data reveals, what it omits, and what its inherent limitations are. This critical lens helps in forming well-rounded conclusions about development and its challenges.

SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Data Analysis*

3.F

Explain possible limitations of the data provided.

TOPIC 7.3

Measures of Development

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

SPS-7

Industrialization, past and present, has facilitated improvements in standards of living, but it has also contributed to geographically uneven development.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

SPS-7.C

Describe social and economic measures of development.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

SPS-7.C.1

Measures of social and economic development include Gross Domestic Product (GDP); Gross National Product (GNP); and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita; sectoral structure of an economy, both formal and informal; income distribution; fertility rates; infant mortality rates; access to health care; use of fossil fuels and renewable energy; and literacy rates.

SPS-7.C.2

Measures of gender inequality, such as the Gender Inequality Index (GII), include reproductive health, indices of empowerment, and labor-market participation.

SPS-7.C.3

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure used to show spatial variation among states in levels of development.

AP Human Geography Topic 7.3: Measures of Development (The Master Guide)

The Big Picture (Enduring Understanding): Industrialization has massively improved global standards of living, but it has not happened evenly. We use specific data points—both economic and social—to measure and compare how "developed" a country is. Remember: The data tells a story. These metrics are the numerical evidence of historical patterns and global inequality.

1. Economic Measures of Development (The "Alphabet Soup")

The definitions below tell you WHERE the money is made and WHO is making it.

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** The total value of all goods and services produced inside a country's borders in a given year.
 - *Memory Trick:* "Domestic" = inside the house (borders), regardless of who owns the company.
- **Gross National Product (GNP):** The total value of goods and services produced by a country's citizens and corporations, regardless of where in the world they are located.
- **Gross National Income (GNI) per capita:** The total income of a country's residents divided by the population.
 - *AP Exam Tip:* The College Board heavily prefers GNI per capita as the most accurate snapshot of an average citizen's wealth because it standardizes globalized wealth per person.

FRQ Narrative: The "Proof" of Wallerstein's Core-Periphery Model Unit 7.3 is the mathematical reality check for Wallerstein's theory (from Unit 7.1). If the Core exploits the Periphery, the data in this unit proves it. The Core shows massively high GNI per capita and high energy consumption. The Periphery shows low official GDPs, high Infant Mortality Rates (IMR), and economies trapped in raw material extraction.

2. Sectoral Structure of the Economy

A country's development level is directly tied to what kind of jobs its citizens do.

- **Primary Sector:** Extracting raw materials (farming, mining, fishing). *High in Less Developed Countries (LDCs).*
- **Secondary Sector:** Manufacturing and processing (factories, assembling goods). *High in Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs).*

- **Tertiary Sector: Services (retail, banking, teaching, healthcare). *High in More Developed Countries (MDCs).***
- **Quaternary/Quinary Sectors: Highly specialized knowledge, research, and top-level decision making.**

FRQ Narrative: The Climb to High-Tech (Sectoral Evolution) The sectoral structure is the ultimate narrative of a nation's economic rise. Look at Taiwan's trajectory: The story starts in the Primary sector (agriculture). Industrialization shifts the narrative to the Secondary sector (basic manufacturing). But the massive leap in GNI per capita and HDI happens when the economy enters the Tertiary and Quaternary sectors—transitioning from basic assembly to dominating highly specialized, knowledge-based tech industries, like engineering AI server cooling systems or developing co-packaged optics (CPO).

3. Social Measures of Development

Wealth isn't the only indicator of development. Social metrics show the actual quality of life.

- **Fertility Rates (TFR):** The average number of children a woman will have. TFR drops as development increases (due to education, careers, and access to contraception).
 - **Infant Mortality Rates (IMR):** The number of deaths of infants under one year old per 1,000 live births. This is one of the most accurate indicators of a country's healthcare system and sanitation.
 - **Access to Healthcare & Literacy Rates:** Higher development directly correlates to better hospitals and higher literacy (especially female literacy, which is a massive catalyst for development).
 - **Energy Use:** MDCs consume far more energy per capita. The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is also an indicator of advanced infrastructure, though MDCs still heavily rely on fossil fuels.
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4. Composite Indexes (The Heavy Hitters)

Composite indexes combine multiple data points into a single score.

- **Human Development Index (HDI):** Created by the UN to show that economic growth alone doesn't mean a country is developed. It combines three dimensions:
 1. **A long and healthy life:** Measured by life expectancy at birth.
 2. **Knowledge:** Measured by expected and mean years of schooling.

3. **A decent standard of living: Measured by GNI per capita.**
 - *Scale: 0.0 to 1.0 (1.0 is the highest level of development, e.g., Norway, Switzerland).*
- **Gender Inequality Index (GII): Measures the gender disparity within a country. (Important: A lower score means LESS inequality). It uses three dimensions:**
 1. **Reproductive Health: Maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates.**
 2. **Empowerment: Share of parliamentary seats held by women and proportion of women with secondary education.**
 3. **Labor Market: Labor force participation rate of women.**

FRQ Narrative: The Gender Empowerment Arc A country cannot reach the highest tiers of the HDI if it intentionally limits half of its population. The narrative here is a domino effect: When a developing country begins to educate girls (improving the GII), those women enter the formal labor market. This delays marriage and childbearing, which plummets the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR).

5. Critical Exam Skill: Limitations of the Data (Suggested Skill 3.F)

The AP exam loves to ask students to critique the data. You must know what the numbers hide.

- **Averages Hide Disparities: GNI per capita is an average. A country might have a high GNI per capita because of a lucrative oil industry, while the vast majority of the population lives in extreme poverty.**
- **Regional Variations: National data hides regional differences. For example, China's eastern coastal cities (Shanghai) are highly developed, while the western rural provinces remain far less developed.**
- **Formal vs. Informal Economy: * Formal: Regulated and taxed by the government (included in GDP/GNI).**
 - **Informal: Unregulated and untaxed (street vendors, cash-in-hand work, black markets).**

The Story Behind the Data: The "Invisible" Survival Narrative Official metrics like GDP and GNI only tell the story of the *taxed* world. For billions of people in LDCs, the real narrative happens completely off the books in the **informal economy**. When you look at an incredibly low GNI per capita for a developing nation and wonder, "How do people survive on \$2 a day?", the answer is the informal economy. It is a story of human resilience and survival that the official data is deliberately blind to.

*** Tip for You: If they are given an FRQ asking them to explain the limitations of GDP, writing about the "informal economy" is almost always a guaranteed point!

AP Human Geography

Unit 7.4

Topic: Women and Economic Development



Enduring Understanding (SPS-7)

Industrialization, past and present, has facilitated improvements in standards of living, but it has also contributed to geographically uneven development.

Learning Objective (SPS-7.D)

Explain how and to what extent changes in economic development have contributed to gender parity.

Essential Knowledge

- **SPS-7.D.1:** The roles of women change as countries develop economically.
 - **SPS-7.D.2:** Although there are more women in the workforce, they do not have equity in wages or employment opportunities.
 - **SPS-7.D.3:** Microloans have provided opportunities for women to create small local businesses, which have improved standards of living.
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Suggested Skill: Data Analysis (3.D)

Compare patterns and trends in maps and in quantitative and geospatial data to draw conclusions.

Prepared for: AP Human Geography Students

**Date: April 12, 2026

AP Human Geography Unit 7.4: Impact of Economic Development on Women's Roles

Economic development is a transformative process that profoundly reshapes societies, and one of its most significant impacts is on the roles and status of women. In AP Human Geography, understanding this dynamic interplay is crucial for analyzing global disparities, demographic trends, and the sustainability of development initiatives. This document will explore how economic development influences women's roles in society, focusing on labor force participation, health, education, and the broader implications for gender equality.

Measuring Gender Equality in Development

To assess the impact of economic development on women, geographers and economists utilize various indices. The **Gender Inequality Index (GII)**, developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is a key composite measure. It reflects gender-based inequalities across three critical dimensions:

1. **Reproductive Health:** Measured by maternal mortality ratios and adolescent birth rates.
2. **Empowerment:** Assessed by the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women and the percentage of women with at least some secondary education.
3. **Labor Market:** Indicated by the female labor force participation rate.

A lower GII value signifies less inequality between genders, generally correlating with higher levels of economic development. Another related measure is the **Gender Development Index (GDI)**, which compares the Human Development Index (HDI) achievements of women and men, highlighting gender gaps in life expectancy, education, and income.

Economic Impacts: Labor Force Participation

Economic development often leads to significant shifts in women's labor force participation. In pre-industrial or less developed economies, women are typically heavily involved in the **primary sector**, particularly in subsistence agriculture, often performing unpaid labor. As industrialization progresses, women increasingly enter the formal wage economy, initially often in the **secondary sector**, such as textile and light manufacturing factories.

This transition, while offering economic independence and wages, can also introduce new challenges. In many Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) and Less Developed Countries (LDCs), women constitute a significant portion of the workforce in **Export Processing Zones (EPZs)**. These zones attract foreign investment due to lower labor costs, and women are often preferred for their perceived dexterity and willingness to accept lower wages. However, working conditions in these factories can be poor, and opportunities for advancement limited.

Even in More Developed Countries (MDCs), where women are highly represented in the **tertiary and quaternary sectors** (services and knowledge-based industries), disparities persist. The phenomenon of the **"glass ceiling"** describes the invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching top leadership positions in the **quinary sector** (high-level decision-making roles), despite their qualifications and experience.

Social Impacts: Health and Education

Economic development generally brings about improvements in women's health and education outcomes:

- **Education:** As countries develop, there is typically increased investment in education, leading to higher female literacy rates and greater enrollment in secondary and tertiary education. Education empowers women with knowledge and skills, enhancing their economic prospects and decision-making capabilities within their households and communities.
- **Health:** Improved healthcare infrastructure and access to medical services, including reproductive healthcare, contribute to lower maternal mortality rates and increased life expectancy for women. This is a critical component of the GII and a direct indicator of improved well-being.

Demographic and Cultural Implications

The empowerment of women through economic development has profound demographic consequences. As women gain more education and economic opportunities, they tend to marry later and have fewer children, leading to a decrease in **Total Fertility Rates (TFR)**. This shift is often associated with a greater ability to control reproductive choices and a focus on career development.

However, the impact of economic development on women's roles is not uniform and can be mediated by cultural and social norms. In some regions, traditional or religious beliefs may continue to limit women's economic and social participation, even as the national economy grows. This highlights the complex interplay between economic forces and deeply ingrained societal structures.

Furthermore, women often face a **"double burden"** or **"dual role,"** where they are expected to participate in the formal workforce while simultaneously bearing the primary responsibility for household chores, childcare, and family care. This can lead to increased stress and limit their ability to fully engage in economic and social life.

Initiatives like **microfinance** (small loans provided to individuals, often women, to start or expand small businesses) have emerged as powerful tools for empowering women economically in LDCs. These programs recognize women's potential as entrepreneurs and their role in community development, often leading to improved family well-being and local economic growth.

In conclusion, economic development is a multifaceted process that significantly alters women's roles, generally leading to increased opportunities, improved health, and greater empowerment. However, it also reveals persistent inequalities and challenges, such as the double burden and cultural barriers, underscoring the complex and uneven nature of progress towards gender equality in a globalized world.

AP Human Geography Study Guide

Topic 7.5: Theories of Development

Required Course Content

- **Enduring Understanding (SPS-7):** Industrialization, past and present, has facilitated improvements in standards of living, but it has also contributed to geographically uneven development.
 - **Learning Objective (SPS-7.E):** Explain different theories of economic and social development.
 - **Essential Knowledge (SPS-7.E.1):** Different theories, such as Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth, Wallerstein's World System Theory, dependency theory, and commodity dependence, help explain spatial variations in development.
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Introduction to Development Theories

Understanding the patterns and processes of economic and social development is central to human geography. Various theories attempt to explain why some countries are wealthy and others are poor, and how countries transition between different levels of development. These theories often highlight different factors, from internal economic structures to global political-economic relationships.

1. Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth (Modernization Theory)

Proposed by W.W. Rostow in 1960, this is a **modernization theory** suggesting that all countries follow a similar, linear path to development. It focuses on **internal factors** and the role of investment as a catalyst for growth.

The Five Stages:

Stage	Characteristics	Example
1. Traditional Society	Economy dominated by subsistence agriculture; limited technology; rigid social structures; resistance to change. Low productivity and income.	Rural areas in LDCs where subsistence farming is the primary livelihood.
2. Preconditions for Takeoff	Investment in infrastructure (roads, ports) and education begins. Emergence of commercial agriculture and small-scale industries. Social/political changes create a foundation for growth.	South Korea and Taiwan in the mid-20th century.
3. Takeoff	Rapid industrialization in a few key sectors. Investment rates rise (over 10% of GDP). Urbanization increases as labor shifts from farms to factories.	The United States during the 19th-century Industrial Revolution.
4. Drive to Maturity	Technology diffuses across the entire economy. Industry diversifies; exports expand beyond initial sectors. Rise of the service sector and increased productivity.	Japan in the post-WWII period.
5. Age of High Mass Consumption	Economy shifts toward consumer goods and services. High incomes, widespread urban middle class, and high living standards. Focus on social welfare.	United States, Canada, and Western Europe in the 20th/21st centuries.

Analysis:

- **Strengths:** Provides a clear, structured framework for understanding historical economic growth in developed nations.
 - **Weaknesses:**
 - **Eurocentric:** Assumes all countries must follow the Western path.
 - **Linearity:** Ignores external barriers like colonialism, global trade imbalances, or political corruption.
 - **Internal Focus:** Overlooks how international exploitation maintains underdevelopment.
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2. Wallerstein's World Systems Theory

Immanuel Wallerstein's theory is a **structural theory** that views the global economy as a single, interconnected unit. It categorizes countries into a hierarchy based on their economic and political power within the global capitalist system.

The Three-Tier Hierarchy:

Tier	Characteristics	Examples
Core	Highly industrialized, technologically advanced, and economically dominant. Controls global finance and trade. Extracts raw materials and cheap labor from other tiers.	USA, UK, Japan, Germany.
Semi-Periphery	Intermediate status; has some industrialization and diversified economies. Exploits the periphery but is exploited by the core. Acts as a buffer in the global system.	Brazil, Russia, India, China, Mexico (BRICM).
Periphery	Less industrialized; primarily focused on raw material extraction and subsistence agriculture. Dependent on the core for capital and manufactured goods. Low wages and weak institutions.	Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Southeast Asia.

Analysis:

- **Strengths:** Explains persistent global inequalities and highlights the role of colonialism and imperialism.
 - **Weaknesses:** Can be overly deterministic (suggesting little hope for upward mobility) and may ignore internal dynamics or agency within a country.
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3. Dependency Theory

Dependency Theory argues that **Less Developed Countries (LDCs)** remain poor because they are economically dependent on **More Developed Countries (MDCs)**. This relationship is rooted in historical colonialism and modern economic structures.

Key Concepts:

- **Unequal Exchange:** LDCs sell raw materials cheaply to MDCs and buy back expensive manufactured goods, leading to a net outflow of wealth.
- **Capital Extraction:** Profits from foreign companies in LDCs are sent back to MDCs rather than being reinvested locally.
- **Neocolonialism:** The continued economic and political influence of former colonial powers over their ex-colonies.
- **Lack of Diversification:** LDCs are pressured to remain primary product exporters, hindering industrial growth.

Analysis:

- **Strengths:** Critiques modernization theory by identifying external barriers to growth and explaining persistent poverty.
 - **Weaknesses:** Can be overly pessimistic and may underemphasize internal factors like governance or corruption.
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4. Commodity Dependence

Commodity dependence occurs when a country relies on the export of a few raw materials (e.g., oil, coffee, minerals) for a significant portion of its GDP and export earnings.

Impacts on Development:

- **Price Volatility:** Global market fluctuations make export earnings unpredictable, hindering long-term planning.
 - **Low Value-Added:** Most profit is made during manufacturing (in core countries), not extraction (in periphery countries).
 - **Dutch Disease:** A boom in one resource sector can devalue other sectors (like manufacturing), making the economy less competitive.
 - **Foreign Control:** Extraction is often managed by multinational corporations, meaning profits leave the host country.
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Conclusion: Comparing the Theories

Feature	Rostow (Modernization)	Wallerstein (World Systems)
Scale	National (Internal focus)	Global (International focus)
Path	Linear (Everyone can develop)	Structural (Development of some requires underdevelopment of others)
Key Driver	Investment and Technology	Global Trade and Power Dynamics
View of LDCs	Just “starting” the path	Trapped in the periphery

Understanding these perspectives is crucial for analyzing why development is uneven and evaluating strategies for promoting global equity.

Title: AP Human Geography Topic 7.5 - Theories of Development Study Guide

Topics:

- Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth (Modernization Model)
- Wallerstein's World Systems Theory (Core-Periphery Model)
- Dependency Theory & Neocolonialism
- Commodity Dependence

Summary: Why are some countries rich and others poor? Topic 7.5 provides the geographic frameworks used to answer this question. This guide contrasts two major worldviews: **Rostow's Model**, an optimistic, step-by-step roadmap that assumes all countries can develop if they follow the path of Western Europe and the US; and **Wallerstein's World Systems Theory / Dependency Theory**, which argue that development isn't a timeline, but rather a web of unequal relationships where wealthy "Core" nations actively exploit poorer "Periphery" nations. Finally, we examine **Commodity Dependence**—the real-world economic trap that currently keeps many developing nations stuck at the bottom of the global hierarchy.

The AP Framework (What the College Board Wants You to Know)

Enduring Understanding (SPS-7): Industrialization, past and present, has facilitated improvements in standards of living, but it has also contributed to geographically uneven development.

Learning Objective (SPS-7.E): Explain different theories of economic and social development.

Essential Knowledge (SPS-7.E.1): Different theories, such as Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth, Wallerstein's World System Theory, dependency theory, and commodity dependence, help explain spatial variations in development.

The Core Narrative: How Did We Get Here?

Unit 7.5 asks one massive question: Why are some countries wealthy while others are impoverished? In AP Human Geography, there are two competing ways to answer this:

1. **The Optimistic View (Modernization):** Any country can get rich if they just follow the historical path of the United States and Western Europe.
2. **The Pessimistic View (Structuralism):** The global economy is a rigged game. Wealthy countries are wealthy *because* they actively exploit poorer countries.

Theory 1: Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth (The "Ladder" to Success)

Walt Rostow created this Modernization Model in the 1950s. He believed development is a linear progression that every country will eventually follow.

The 5 Stages:

1. **Traditional Society:** The economy is based on subsistence agriculture (primary sector). Very little technology. Society is rigid and localized.
2. **Preconditions for Take-off:** A leadership class emerges. They start investing in infrastructure (roads, water systems, ports) and commercializing agriculture.
3. **Take-off:** The "Industrial Revolution" phase. Rapid growth happens in a few specific manufacturing industries (like textiles or food processing). Urbanization increases.
4. **Drive to Maturity:** Technology diffuses to *all* industries. The economy diversifies. Workers become highly skilled, and the country relies less on imports.
5. **High Mass Consumption:** The economy shifts entirely to the tertiary (service) sector. Citizens have disposable income and buy non-essential consumer goods (cars, appliances).

AP Exam Tip: The Limitations of Rostow (How to Critique It) The AP Exam rarely asks you to just list the stages; they ask you why the model is flawed.

- It is Eurocentric: It assumes the Western, capitalist path is the *only* way to develop.
- It ignores history: It assumes all countries start at the same "baseline," ignoring the fact that Western Europe's "take-off" was heavily fueled by colonizing and extracting resources from other nations.
- Environmental limits: The Earth does not have enough resources for every single country to reach "High Mass Consumption."

Theory 2: Wallerstein's World Systems Theory (The "Rigged Web")

Immanuel Wallerstein argued against Rostow. He stated that countries don't exist in a vacuum climbing their own separate ladders. Instead, the world is one interconnected capitalist web where power is inherently unequal.

The Three Tiers:

1. **The Core:** Highly developed, wealthy MDCs (US, Western Europe, Japan). They buy raw materials, manufacture high-value goods, and hold global political and economic power.

2. **The Periphery:** LDCs (much of Sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Latin America/Asia). They have low levels of wealth and education. Their role in the world system is to provide cheap labor and raw materials to the Core.
3. **The Semi-Periphery:** NICs (China, Mexico, Brazil, India). The "middlemen." They are industrializing and manufacturing goods for the Core, but they still exploit the Periphery for raw materials.

AP Exam Tip: The Limitations of Wallerstein

- **Too Economically Focused:** It ignores how cultural factors, domestic government corruption, or civil wars might be the actual reasons holding a Periphery country back.
- **It assumes countries are stuck:** While it allows countries to move up to the Semi-Periphery, it is very pessimistic about Periphery countries ever reaching the Core.

Theory 3: Dependency Theory & Neocolonialism

This theory acts as the foundation for Wallerstein's model.

- **Dependency Theory:** The idea that resources flow from poor, underdeveloped states to a "core" of wealthy states, enriching the latter at the expense of the former.
- **Neocolonialism:** Even though former colonies gained *political* independence after WWII, they remained *economically* dependent on their former colonizers.
 - *Example:* A newly independent African nation might have its own president, but a European multinational corporation still owns its diamond mines, meaning the profits leave the country.

Theory 4: Commodity Dependence (The Modern Trap)

- **Definition:** A country is considered commodity-dependent when more than 60% of its total exports are made up of primary commodities (raw materials or agricultural products like oil, copper, coffee, or bananas).
- **The Vulnerability (Skill 2.C - Predicting Outcomes):** If an entire nation's wealth relies on exporting coffee, and a drought ruins the crop (or global coffee prices crash), the entire national economy collapses. They cannot afford to invest in education or infrastructure, keeping them trapped in the Periphery.

Vocabulary List:

- **Modernization Model:** Another name for Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth; the idea that development involves transferring from a traditional society to a modern one.

- **Structuralist Theory:** Models (like Wallerstein's) that argue global economic disparities are built into the structure of the world economy and cannot be easily changed.
- **Core-Periphery Model:** The spatial representation of World Systems Theory, dividing the world into exploiting (Core) and exploited (Periphery) regions.
- **Neocolonialism:** The use of economic, political, or cultural pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies.
- **Commodity:** A raw material or primary agricultural product that can be bought and sold (e.g., copper, coffee, oil).
- **Commodity Dependence:** When a nation's economy is highly vulnerable because the vast majority of its export earnings come from just one or two raw materials.